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U.S. Firm On Ousting 25 Soviets

21 Reportedly Leave; Shultz Emphasizes Stemming Espionage

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Secretary of State George P. Shultz, saying the administration is determined to stop the Soviet Union from using its mission to the United Nations in New York as "a base for spying in the United States," insisted yesterday that the 25 Soviet diplomats ordered expelled last week must leave the country by Oct. 1.

After two days of talks here with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, Shultz appeared to rule out any compromise over the 25 Soviets named in the U.S. expulsion order as part of a possible deal with Moscow for the release of American reporter Nicholas Daniloff.

"We're going to maintain our insistence there," Shultz said in an interview on ABC News' "This Week with David Brinkley."

The Associated Press reported last night that as many as 21 of the 25 Soviets ordered expelled left the country on an Aeroflot plane from John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York at 4:30 p.m. Valentin Karymov, senior counselor at the Soviet mission, told the AP that all 25 would leave by the Oct. 1 deadline.

The mission press secretary, Anatoly Khudiakov, told the AP that the Soviets "hoped the United States government would alter the decision. We still hope they would. But still . . . we are on the territory

of the United States, on United States soil."

Neither White House nor State Department officials could confirm the reported departures last night.

Earlier yesterday, Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennadi Gerasimov, speaking on CBS News' "Face the Nation," expressed optimism that "some kind of solution" can be found to free Daniloff before he goes on trial on espionage charges. But he indicated that any solution would have to be linked to a reversal of the U.S. order to expel the Soviets.

President Reagan, in a speech today at the U.N. General Assembly, is expected to make an issue of Daniloff's continuing detention in the Soviet Union.

Shultz and Shevardnadze, in simultaneous news conferences Saturday at the end of their 14 hours of talks, agreed that conditions exist for a productive superpower summit but that the Soviet refusal to release Daniloff and the U.S. expulsion order remain as obstacles.

A senior administration official said, "If it weren't for Daniloff, they [Shultz and Shevardnadze] would have set a date for the summit."

In his Saturday news conference, Shevardnadze said he expected to meet with Shultz this week in New York and expressed optimism that the cases could be resolved. But Gerasimov said yesterday that no meeting has been scheduled.

Shultz and Shevardnadze will be attending meetings of the General Assembly this week, and Shultz yesterday left open the possibility of a session with the Soviet foreign minister "if there was anything substantial to talk about." Noting what Shevardnadze said on Saturday, Shultz added, "I hope that means that he may have some new information" about Daniloff.

Gerasimov noted that Daniloff, a correspondent for U.S. News & World Report, was scheduled to go on trial for espionage. But he quickly added that "because we don't want this particular case to be an obstacle in our relations, we can find some kind of solution and let him free."

Gerasimov also said that while Daniloff had been charged with spying, "Of course, there is an assumption of innocence until it is proven in court." But he said the case against Daniloff was "very strong indeed" and that the Soviets had shown U.S. authorities some of the evidence against him.

Still, Gerasimov's comments on the whole seemed conciliatory and stood in marked contrast to those made Thursday by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, who described Daniloff as a "spy who was caught in the act."

Gerasimov indicated that a Soviet decision to release Daniloff depended on the resolution of "other cases," and said the fate of the 25 Soviets, who U.S. officials say are KGB officers, was one of them.

Shultz, however, appeared to rule out any linkage of the two issues.

He said the administration was not going to tolerate the Soviet use of its U.N. mission as a base for spying and that this was the main reason the United States arrested Gennadi Zakharov, a Soviet employee in the U.N. Secretariat, on Aug. 23.

"The president's view is very clear. He wants to stop spying on the U.S.," Shultz said. "We want to make it clear that we're not going to tolerate this activity, and that's the president's guidance."

A week after Zakharov's arrest, Daniloff was arrested in Moscow as he was receiving a package containing secret military films from an acquaintance.

The only hint of flexibility over the U.S. expulsion order by administration officials yesterday was the suggestion that Washington might relent on its demand that the size of the Soviet U.N. mission be down to 218 by Oct. 1.

One source said "it's not beyond the realm of possibility" that the administration could compromise on the number of people allowed to stay at the mission after Oct. 1 as part of a four-stage cut over two years to reduce the number of Soviet diplomats to 170.

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But the source said this flexibility was contingent upon the Soviet release of Daniloff and compliance with the U.S. demand that the 25 diplomats already named leave the United States on schedule.

The same source also said there would be no "public linkage" between any compromise on the size of the Soviet mission after Oct. 1 and the Daniloff case, but that if he were released, other issues dealing with the Soviet U.N. mission were negotiable.

The source refused to say where Zakharov might fit into a possible compromise, except to say that he was part of the "whole Soviet spy process."

Shultz rejected the Soviet argument that the U.S. expulsion of its mission diplomats was a violation of the 1947 headquarters agreement signed between the United States and the United Nations. He said the United States had the right under the agreement "to safeguard our own security interests."

"Certainly denying the ability of an employee of the United Nations to spy on us is safeguarding legitimately our security interests," he said, making no distinction between Zakharov, a U.N. employee, and the 25 Soviet U.N. mission members who have never been formally accused by the administration of spying.

Meanwhile, Shultz said the latest Gorbachev letter to Reagan, deliv-

ered by Shevardnadze at a 45-minute White House meeting Friday devoted mostly to the Daniloff case, dealt mainly with various aspects of the ongoing arms control negotiations. He said some of what Gorbachev had to say was "quite interesting," but did not elaborate.

An administration source familiar with the letter's contents said there were "no surprises" and that the Soviet proposal on medium-range missiles in Europe and Asia—which he did not disclose—was "the most promising element."

The source said Reagan will make a positive reference to the possibility for a U.S.-Soviet agreement on these missiles in his address to the United Nations today.

The source also said that a report yesterday in The New York Times that the United States has offered a new proposal that would limit at 200 the overall number of missile warheads allowed on medium-range missiles in both Europe and Asia was generally correct.

But he said the administration had not agreed to allow the Soviets to keep up to 100 warheads on such missiles in Asia unless it was "an interim step" on the way to a total removal of them in Asia.

He said the Japanese government had already expressed concern privately about this reported proposal and that the administration also expected that China would be displeased with it.

Staff writer Walter Pincus contributed to this report.

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